

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 STR-04 EB-07 COME-00 OMB-01

TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

VO-03 SCA-01 CU-02 /092 W
----- 123936

R 301245Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7989

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCOM MARQUES

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BLANTYRE 0651

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, RH

SUBJ: RHODESIA: VIEWS OF REV NDABANINGI SITHOLE

1. SUMMARY: DURING CALL AT EMB MAY 29, SITHOLE DESCRIBED
LATEST MOVES TOWARD CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE IN RHODESIA
INCLUDING REPORTED MUTUAL ACCOMMODATION IN WHICH SMITH WOULD
FOREGO INSISTENCE ON EFFECTIVE CEASE-FIRE AND ANC WOULD DROP
DEMAND FOR RELEASE OF REMAINING POLITICAL DETAINEES. SITHOLE SAID
ANC WOULD STICK WITH MUZOREWA'S LEADERSHIP FOR TIME BEING AND WOULD
NOT HASTEN TOWARD ANC LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE BUT CONCENTRATE ON
DEALING WITH SMITH. SITHOLE PLANS TRAVEL TO US IN EARLY JUNE.
END SUMMARY.

2. NDABANINGI SITHOLE CALLED ON AMB AT HIS REQUEST MAY
29. THIS WAS FIRST TIME ANY ANC LEADER HAS TAKEN INITIATIVE TO
CONTACT THIS EMBASSY ALTHOUGH WE HAVE ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS SOUGHT
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OUT BISHOP MUZOREWA DURING HIS STOPS HERE.

3. CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE: SITHOLE EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT SMITH SERIOUSLY WISHES NEGOTIATE AND SEVERAL TIMES REFERRED TO IMPATIENCE OF LIBERATION GROUPS WHICH INCREASED PROBABILITY OF VIOLENT SOLUTIONS IN RHODESIA. HOWEVER AT LATER POINT HE REFERRED TO MUTUAL ACCOMMODATION JUST AGREED BETWEEN SMITH AND ANC WHERE-UNDER SMITH WOULD DROP DEMAND FOR EFFECTIVE CEASE FIRE AND ANC WOULD DROP INSISTENCE ON RELEASE OF REMAINING POLITICAL DETAINEES IN ORDER OPEN WAY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE. SITHOLE SAID HE HAD HEARD OF THIS DEVELOPMENT DURING TELEPHONE CONVERSATION FROM LUSAKA WITH ASSOCIATES IN RHODESIA AND THAT HIS OWN ACQUIESCENCE HAD BEEN SOUGHT AND RECEIVED. PRESSED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THIS WAS FAVORABLE DEVELOPMENT INDICATING SURPRISING SMITH FLEXIBILITY, SITHOLE APPEARED GRUDGINGLY TO AGREE BUT GAVE CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT HE WOULD HAVE PERSONALLY FAVORED MORE COMPLETE CAPITULATION BY SMITH AND ASSOCIATES. SAID ANC LEADERSHIP WOULD PRESUMABLY DECIDE THIS COMING SUNDAY, JUNE 1ST, WHETHER OR NOT TO BEGIN MEETINGS WITH SMITH ON THESE TERMS.

4. ANC LEADERSHIP: SITHOLE SAID IT HAD NOW BEEN DECIDED NOT TO HOLD ANC CONFERENCE FOR PURPOSE OF SORTING OUT THIS ISSUE. ALL NOW AGREE, HE SAID, THAT MUZOREWA'S LEADERSHIP IS ADEQUATE TO TASK OF ACHIEVING NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE. ANC ACCORDINGLY WOULD CONCENTRATE ON THIS PROBLEM AND FOREGO CONCERN WITH LEADERSHIP ISSUE UNTIL AFTER SETTLEMENT. HE APPEARED TO SAY THIS WITH SOME SATISFACTION, REFLECTING PROBABLY BELIEF THAT RIVAL NKOMO'S CAMPAIGN FOR ANC LEADERSHIP HAS BEEN TEMPORARILY INTERRUPTED.

5. CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE AGENDA: SITHOLE SAID MAIN OBJECTIVE OF ANC WOULD BE TO PIN DOWN DATE ON WHICH TRANSITION TO MAJORITY RULE WOULD BEGIN. HE INDICATED THAT MAJORITY RULE MUST BE AGREED TO NOW BUT BY THIS HE MEANS THE QUESTION OF PRINCIPLE. MEANING OF "NOW" IS MATTER FOR NEGOTIATION AND COMPROMISE. HE PERSONALLY ACCEPTED THAT FULL MAJORITY RULE WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE IMMEDIATELY AND THAT TRANSITION PERIOD WOULD BE REQUIRED. THE SOONER THE LATTER BEGAN, THE SOONER IT WILL BE OVER; THUS, THE NEED TO PIN DOWN DATE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. ASKED IF HE THINKS CONFERENCE HAS CHANCE SUCCEED, HE REPLIED NEGATIVELY AND NOTED THAT NON-VIOLENT EFFORT HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR 10 YEARS WITH NO

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RESULT TO DATE. HE FEELS MAJORITY OF WHITE RHODESIANS BACK SMITH AND THAT LATTER WILL NOT NEGOTIATE IN GOOD FAITH.

6. U.S. ROLE: COURTEOUSLY BUT RATHER EMPHATICALLY HE ASKED WHAT MORE THE USG COULD DO TO BACK THE ANC IN ITS EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THE SITUATION WITHOUT VIOLENCE. ADDED THAT USG AND UK IN A POSITION TO DO MUCH MORE BUT ESPECIALLY LATTER'S ROLE HAS BEEN OF NO HELP. WE POINTED OUT CURRENT ADMINISTRATION EFFORTS REPEAL BYRD AMEND-

MENT AND OBSERVED EXCEPT FOR CHROME US HAS STRICTLY ABIDED BY SANCTIONS AND MORE HONESTLY WE BELIEVE THAN MANY OTHER COUNTRIES. WE ASKED WHAT MORE HE THINKS US COULD DO BUT HE MADE NO ANSWER, MERELY REITERATING HIS OBSERVATION THAT NON-VIOLENCE HAS NOT WORKED AND EXPRESSING DOUBTS THAT IT EVER WILL. WE ALSO POINTED OUT TO HIM APPARENT WILLINGNESS OF UK TO HELP INDEPENDENT MOZAMBIQUE IF LATTER APPLIES SANCTIONS TO RHODESIA WHICH HARDLY SUPPORTS HIS COMMENT THAT UK NOT WILLING REALLY HELP. RELUCTANTLY HE SEEMED TO ACCEPT POINT AND AGREED THAT MOZAMBIQUE ACTION WILL GREATLY INCREASE PRESSURE ON SMITH BUT "HE WILL FIND WAYS TO GET AROUND IT AS HE HAS DONE BEFORE".

7. ANC-MALAWI: SITHOLE SAID HE CALLED ON PRES BANDA MAY 28 BUT HAD BEEN UNABLE DETERMINE WHAT BANDA'S POSITION ON RHODESIA OR POSSIBLE MOZAMBIQUE SANCTIONS WAS. SITHOLE SAID HE HAD OUTLINED HIS POSITION AND RUEFULLY NOTED THAT HE HOPED ON LATER OCCASION TO HAVE BENEFIT OF DR. BANDA'S VIEWS. SITHOLE LEFT IMPRESSION BANDA HAD EVADED MEANINGFUL DISCUSSION OF RHODESIA-MALAWI RELATIONS.

8. ANC EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION: ANC IS NOW IN PROCESS OF ORGANIZING SYSTEM OF OFFICES REPRESENTING ANC TO SUPPORTING AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS. HE SAID IN DUE COURSE SUCH AN OFFICE WOULD BE ESTABLISHED IN MALAWI. WE RECEIVED IMPRESSION THIS MAY HAVE BEEN A MAIN OBJECTIVE OF HIS CURRENT VISIT AND DISCUSSION WITH BANDA. (JOSHUA NKOMO ALSO CALLED ON BANDA ON MAY 21.)

9. SITHOLE SAID HE IS RETURNING TO DAR ES SALAAM JUNE 4 AND SHORTLY THERAFTER WOULD TRAVEL TO US TO ATTEND CONFERENCE OF UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN MINNEAPOLIS AND TO VISIT CHILDREN NOW STUDYING IN MASSACHUSETTS (WORCESTER COLLEGE AND CLARK U). HE REQUESTED FACILITATIVE ASSISTANCE WITH US VISA FOR DEPENDENT DAUGHTER WHO HAD JUST BEEN PERMITTED DEPART RHODESIA FOR STUDY
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IN US. (SEPTTEL TO DAR FOLLOWS).

10. COMMENT: THROUGHOUT DISCUSSIONS SITHOLE GAVE IMPRESSION OF DISCOURAGED MAN WHO NO LONGER HAS ANY FAITH IN POSSIBILITY OF NON-VIOLENT SOLUTION IN RHODESIA. WE WOULD GUESS WHAT HE REALLY WOULD LIKE FROM THE US IS HELP FOR ANC LIBERATION FORCES. HE STUDIED THEOLOGY AT ANDOVER NEWTON SEMINARY AND CLEARLY HAS A GREAT FONDNESS FOR THE US DESPITE HIS IMPATIENCE WITH US. IT SEEMS TO US THAT CHANCES FOR A MEANINGFUL CONFERENCE BETWEEN SMITH AND ANC COULD WELL BE BETTER WITH SITHOLE OUT OF THE COUNTRY AND ALSO POSSIBLE THAT BOTH PARTIES TACITLY AGREE ON THIS POINT. IT WOULD ALSO SEEM DOUBTFUL THAT SITHOLE HAS ESCAPED COMPLETELY UNTAINTED FROM RECENT UNSAVORY DISCLOSURES RE ZANU INTRA-PARTY VIOLENCE.
STEVENSON

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